

MISSION STATEMENT

Vision- that every youth caring for an ill, injured, elderly or disabled family member will achieve success in school and life.

Mission- to increase awareness and provide support services for youth caregivers and their families by connecting healthcare, education and community resources.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are matched according to their skills, interests and abilities.

- Mentoring
- Tutoring
- Community Outreach
- Clerical Assistance
- Fundraising
- Social Networking
- Video Experts
- Writers
- Public Relations
- Basic Computer Skills

TRAVELING TEDDY Award

The Traveling Teddy Award is presented every three months at a staff meeting to an employee who exemplifies "excellence in utilizing and contributing to volunteer programs." The continuing success of our volunteer program requires a supportive working relationship between staff and volunteers. The recipient of this "coveted" award is Richane Etienne, Family Specialist. Richane is the link between our mentors and our mentees' families. Congratulations, Richane!

Dear Volunteers:

In a past issue of Energize, a magazine for leaders of volunteers, Susan Ellis states that volunteers are "the silver lining in the cloud of disaster." She goes on to remind us that despite mismanagement and confusion during times of tragic events and subsequent relief efforts, the consistently bright spots of the news reporting were what people were doing to help one another. Ordinary people, private citizens, drop everything to work directly at disaster sites, open their homes to evacuees, conduct fundraising events for the relief effort, attempt to reunite pets with their owners and offer caring support. I just read a story in which a couple who had been married for 35 years decided that a donation was not adequate. They drove 545 miles across Florida to the site of Hurricane Michael, set up a grill and prepared hamburgers for over 500 people who were displaced.

Erma Bombeck once said, *"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another."*

As we approach the holiday season here at AACY, we want to thank all of our volunteers for their tireless efforts in helping our caregiving youth as they navigate school and life challenges. We wish you and your family a happy, healthy and fulfilling New Year!

Marcy Bezark
Volunteer Manager



The "Pink Ladies" at our Broadway themed Hearts & Soles Gala. Michelle Dolan, Marcella Martinez, Brenna Hovatter and Richane Etienne, our Traveling Teddy recipient.

Reasons to Try Volunteering

A recent survey conducted by VolunteerMatch in partnership with UnitedHealthcare revealed that 75 percent of U.S. adults feel physically healthier by volunteering and nearly 9 in 10 note an improvement in mood and increased self-esteem, among other health benefits.

The Doing Good is Good for You study looked at four categories with the following results:
Health – Volunteers say they feel physically, mentally and emotionally better.
Purpose-Volunteers feel a deeper connection to communities and others.
Stress-Volunteering helps people manage and lower stress.
Engagement-Volunteers are more informed and involved in managing their health.

Of adults who volunteered in the past 12 months, nearly...
100% felt good and happy
75% felt physically healthier
80% experienced lower stress levels.

Volunteering –give it a try. For more information about volunteering, call 561-391-7401 or email to marcy@aacy.org



PERSONALITY PROFILE – ELIOT POPPER

When Eliot first came to see me in June of 2016, he told me that he “wanted to do more than check writing.” He had learned about our organization after attending our annual Hearts & Soles gala and was impressed with our mission of increasing awareness and providing support for youth caregivers and their families. He expressed his interest in becoming a mentor through the M.A.C.Y. program.

Prior to contacting us, Eliot mentored a young man at Best Foot Forward. Although the connection was short-lived (the mentee left the program), Eliot felt that he made a difference in his life. And now he is well into his second year of being matched with Marc Charles, a 16 year old attending Boynton Beach High School.

Eliot told me that Marc Charles really “needed a male mentor. From our first meeting he said ‘when do we get started?’ My goal is to get him out of his environment. Academics is all he has. He has to do well in school. It’s his way out.”

Although Eliot is a wealth advisor for a major financial company, he had a “modest” upbringing. “My mother was a first generation American. My father never finished high school and my mother was a high school graduate. I always knew I would go to college. I knew there was more to life.” He graduated from Northeastern U., received his MBA from Lynn U. and is now working on his doctorate. I guess “the reason I am the way I am is I always had the desire to ‘go for it.’”

Eliot and Marc Charles have been meeting every other week, usually having a bite to eat and discussing his academic progress. “I would like to see him attend Palm Beach State when he graduates.” In the two years they have been meeting, Eliot said that Marc Charles is “maturing. He is becoming a nice young man.” In addition to their bi-weekly meetings, the two have gone to the movies and bowling. He also has taken Marc Charles to a driving range to hit golf balls. In addition, he has been encouraging Marc Charles to volunteer at the Milagro Center by helping some of the younger students who attend the after-school program.

Eliot concluded by saying “I want to see this thing through. I want to see him put on that cap and gown and graduate. That is my goal.”



Congratulations to Debralyn Belletieri on being honored at the Women of Grace Luncheon.



Marc Charles and Eliot on a recent M.A.C.Y. outing